

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 279 766

UD 025 379

TITLE Model Practices in the 1985-86 Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention Program. OEA Evaluation Report.

INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn. Office of Educational Assessment.

PUB DATE Sep 86

NOTE 58p.; Prepared by the OEA Student Progress Evaluation Unit.

AVAILABLE FROM Office of Educational Assessment, New York City Board of Education, 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Attendance; *Dropout Programs; Group Unity; Job Training; Junior High Schools; Parent Participation; Predictor Variables; School Counseling; Success; *Urban Education

IDENTIFIERS *New York (New York)

ABSTRACT

New York City's middle school Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention (AIDP) program for the 1985-86 school year is evaluated at 10 schools whose programs most closely adhered to the guidelines developed by the Chancellor. The report includes an introduction with background information on the program and evaluation; a literature review discussing predictor variables, recommendations for intervention, and program guidelines; information on model sites; and conclusions and recommendations. The following characteristics contributed to success: (1) the selection and assignment of quality staff; (2) high level of staff communication and training; (3) sense of group identity and program ownership by staff and students; (4) high level of support from the district and central offices; (5) opportunities for school facilitators to meet periodically and share information; (6) well-organized, daily attendance monitoring procedures, team visits to homes, and ongoing staff training for family workers; (7) high quality counseling staff and a case management approach to serving students; (8) individual health counseling and health education classes for students; (9) informed and involved high school linkages; and (10) alternative education programs that teach marketable skills and are comparable with real work situations. Recommendations include proposals for improved staff training and organization, coordination with other programs, incentives for non-program students, and greater involvement of district and school personnel in program planning. (PS)

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MODEL PRACTICES IN THE 1985-86
ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AND DROPOUT
PREVENTION PROGRAM

OEA Evaluation Report

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September, 1986

MODEL PRACTICES IN THE 1985-86
ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AND DROPOUT
PREVENTION PROGRAM

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was the result of the efforts of many people. Patti Slobogin designed and coordinated the evaluation. Ida Heyman and Nancy Yacker participated in site visits and assisted in writing the report. Other site visits were made by Judy Golz who also assisted in editing the report. The report was typed by Lutisha Clark and Lucy Krolan.

Thanks are due to various individuals involved in A.I.D.P., including Office of Student Progress personnel, A.I.D.P. district coordinators and school staff, students, and school principals, who generously gave of their time and ideas.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

BACKGROUND

In 1984-85 the State Education Department (S.E.D.) first allocated funds to the New York City community school districts for the purpose of developing Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention (A.I.D.P.) programs. In 1985-86 the S.E.D. allocated \$11.6 million to develop or expand these programs in the middle schools. The Chancellor's Office selected 68 middle schools whose attendance was at or below the city-wide median attendance rate of 87 percent to participate in the program. Program guidelines developed by the Chancellor, with the assistance of the Office of Student Progress (O.S.P.), required that each A.I.D.P. school was to have six program components in place at the start of the 1985-86 school year. They were: facilitation, attendance, guidance, health, school level linkage, and alternative education programs.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report is concerned with the middle school A.I.D.P. program. It describes the practices O.E.A. evaluators observed at ten A.I.D.P. schools designated by O.S.P. assistants as having programs that most closely adhered to the Chancellor's guidelines. It is intended to provide useful information to those responsible for developing the A.I.D.P. program in 1986-87. O.E.A. will issue a second report evaluating the city-wide program in 1985-86 and examining its effect on the attendance and achievement of student participants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of studies on high school dropouts indicates that measures of academic performance such as reading and math scores, the number of times a student has been held over, and behavioral characteristics such as disciplinary problems, suspensions, and class cutting can be used to predict which students will drop out of high school. Some studies also found a relationship between the probability of dropping out of school and the educational attainment of the parents.

Several studies included evaluations of attendance improvement programs and made the following recommendations:

- At-risk students should be identified in elementary school.
- At-risk students should be placed in classes with a small student to staff ratio.

- Programs should stress basic skills instruction, with an emphasis on reading comprehension and language arts. Classes in career awareness are recommended.
- There should be regular and mandatory counseling of students for educational, vocational, and personal adjustment problems.
- Efforts should be made to increase parent involvement in their child's education.
- Program record-keeping procedures should be carefully developed and standardized.

FINDINGS

Model A.I.D.P. Practices

Model sites shared certain characteristics that appeared to contribute to their overall success. These included the selection and assignment of quality staff; a high level of staff communication including opportunities for staff to receive appropriate training, share information about students, coordinate services, and discuss problems; a sense of group identity and program ownership shared by staff and students; and a high level of support, which included immediate response to specific requests, from the district and central offices.

In addition to these general features, specific practices were noted for the model components.

- Facilitation: Facilitation was enhanced when the district created opportunities for school facilitators to meet periodically and share information. The Pupil Personnel Committee worked best when it included non-A.I.D.P. staff as well as program personnel and when it focused on coordinating services in several areas.
- Attendance: Model attendance practices included well organized daily monitoring procedures, team visits to the home, and ongoing staff training for family workers.
- Guidance: Guidance components benefitted from a high-quality counseling staff and from a case management approach to serving students which made use of the collective efforts of many staff members in addition to a senior guidance person. Successful parent involvement and activities for students that promoted small-group identity were also characteristic of model guidance programs.

- Health: The Health Resource Coordinator in the model health program provided individual counseling and health education classes to students as well as reviewed student records and referred students for physical exams.
- School Level Linkage: Model high school linkage programs all had an informed and involved high school liaison. The best linkages were to high schools in which students were interested and which students were likely to attend.
- Alternative Education Programs: Career awareness programs were enhanced when the career awareness position was combined with another A.I.D.P. position such as facilitator or guidance counselor. Model enterprises were comparable to real work situations and taught students marketable skills. In these model enterprises, students were involved with planning, accounting, and manufacturing as well as with selling products. Model extended-day programs consisted of appealing small-group activities run by staff members that were popular with the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the observations of O.E.A. evaluators and interviews with A.I.D.P. staff and administrators:

- The facilitator either should be made a full-time position or a half-time position paired with a non-teaching position.
- District training and planning sessions should be held on a regular basis.
- Increased efforts should be made to improve the coordination of A.I.D.P. services with those of other district and school programs.
- Staff should schedule activities that would encourage the growth of group identity such as high interest clubs and mentor activities.
- Efforts should be made to provide in-service training and support for classroom teachers working with program students.
- In order to avoid the perception by students that only "at risk" behavior is rewarded, incentives should be made available to non-program students with good attendance and academic achievement.

- Support should be given during the school day to help returning truants adjust to the classroom.
- The alternative education component should include more teacher training and increased efforts to develop summer and work-study jobs for students.
- Students in the lower grades should be included in the A.I.D.P. program.
- There should be greater involvement of district and school personnel in the initial planning of the program and greater flexibility in the guidelines to allow for different needs at individual sites.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The State Education Department (S.E.D.) allocated \$21.5 million to fund the 1985-86 Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention (A.I.D.P.) program in New York City schools. The program was to identify students who were excessively absent or otherwise at risk of dropping out and to provide services that would improve their attendance and academic achievement. Of this allocation, \$1.4 million went to the Division of Special Education and \$0.7 million was reserved for evaluation and programs operated by community based organizations. Sixty percent of the remaining funds (\$11.6 million) was used to develop and operate programs in junior high and intermediate schools (hereafter referred to as middle schools) and forty percent (\$7.8 million) was used to develop programs in high schools. This report is concerned with the middle school A.I.D.P. program.

The S.E.D. defined eligible schools as those at or below the city-wide median attendance rate of 87 percent. The Chancellor's Office selected 68 of the eligible middle schools to participate based on the schools' feeder patterns to A.I.D.P. high schools, average daily registers, and average daily absences. Each selected school received \$150,000 to serve 150 students.

Chancellor's Special Circular No. 29, 1984-1985, established guidelines for the design of district A.I.D.P. programs. These guidelines were subsequently modified by the Office of Student Progress (O.S.P.). Every school was required to have six program components in place at the start of the 1985-86 school year. These components were:

- Facilitation: A teacher was to serve as the site facilitator for two periods a day in order to identify and track the progress of students, coordinate program activities, collect and report data, and coordinate the Pupil Personnel Committee.

- Attendance: Each school was to develop outreach strategies to follow up on the absences of targeted students. These services were to supplement, not replace, daily attendance services and to focus on improving parent awareness of the child's poor attendance and its educational consequences.
- Guidance: Licensed or certified school counselors, social workers, or Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention Services (SAPIS) workers, were to provide appropriate counseling to every targeted student in order to identify and address problems that might contribute to poor attendance.
- Health: Schools were to work collaboratively with the New York City Health Department to provide diagnostic screening to all targeted students in physical, psychological, and educational areas that might affect attendance; to make referrals for follow-up services; and to ensure that these services were provided.
- School Level Linkage: Schools were to work collaboratively with feeder high schools to develop strategies to ease the transition from one school level to the next.
- Alternative Educational Programs: Schools were given a choice of providing career education classes to all A.I.D.P. students or providing small-group or individual academic attention in an extended day program. These programs were to be funded only if all other components were already in place.

BACKGROUND

The S.E.D. first allocated funds for A.I.D.P. for the 1984-85 school year. Funds were provided to the 32 New York City community school districts to develop and implement programs to increase school attendance and decrease the drop-out rate in both elementary and middle schools. Districts established a variety of A.I.D.P. programs providing services of varying effectiveness. Two reports by the Office of Educational Assessment (O.E.A.) present information on the implementation and outcome of these programs.*

* The Interim Report of the 1984-85 Community School District Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program and the Final Evaluation of the 1984-85 Community School District Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program are available from the Office of Educational Assessment.

In February, 1985 the Chancellor's Office, together with the Office of High School Support Services and O.S.P., designed and funded Project Connect as a pilot program to test the effectiveness of some of the services that appeared to be working in the larger A.I.D.P. program. Project Connect was directed specifically at students in the final grades of middle school who were judged to be at risk of dropping out between middle school and high school. The guidelines for Project Connect included specific practices in the areas of attendance outreach, family outreach, in-school suspension, guidance, tutoring, work-study, high school linkages, and the use of teacher mentors. O.E.A. issued an interim report and a final report evaluating Project Connect.*

The Chancellor's Office and O.S.P. developed the guidelines for the 1985-86 A.I.D.P. program based on the experience of implementing these programs. Emphasis was placed on creating a comprehensive and uniform plan for all districts in order to ensure that students' needs were identified and addressed appropriately and that all available resources were used without duplication or omission of services. Elementary schools were eliminated from the program in order to provide more services in the middle schools where students are closer to the legal age for dropping out and also are approaching the difficult transition to high school.

* The Interim Report on Project Connect, 1984-85 and the Final Report on Project Connect, 1984-85 are available from the Office of Educational Assessment.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

This report is not an evaluation of the overall A.I.D.P. program. O.E.A. will publish another report evaluating the implementation of the program in the community school districts and analyzing the attendance and academic achievement of student participants..

This report describes the practices observed at ten A.I.D.P. sites designated by O.S.P. as having one or more model components. It is intended to provide useful information to those who are responsible for developing and implementing the A.I.D.P. program and focuses on the following questions:

- What does the current literature on dropout prevention say about identifying students at risk of dropping out and about effective interventions? Does the A.I.D.P. program address issues raised in the literature?
- What organizational and administrative factors appeared to contribute to effective implementation of the program?
- What specific practices within each of the six components appeared to be successful?

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

To answer these questions O.E.A. evaluators visited ten of the sites that O.S.P. assistants designated as having model practices. (Because O.S.P. assistants were responsible for visiting all A.I.D.P. sites on a regular basis, they were able to identify sites that appeared to be successful in working with students and implementing program guidelines.) Four of these sites were considered to be overall model programs. The other six sites had one or more model components.

O.E.A. evaluators thus visited five sites with model facilitation practices, five with model attendance practices, seven with model guidance practices, one with model health practices, three with model school level linkage practices, and seven with model alternative education practices.

Two evaluators visited each site in January or February and one evaluator returned to each site in May or June. During the first visit evaluators interviewed all available A.I.D.P. staff, reviewed all program records, and, where possible, observed part of the model component in operation. During the second visit the evaluator interviewed the principal and administered a questionnaire to 20 randomly selected students. District coordinators and O.S.P. assistants were interviewed as well.

As a result, eight district coordinators, (one district had three model sites), nine principals and one assistant principal, ten facilitators, nine A.I.D.P. guidance personnel, twelve family workers or school aides, three Health Resource Coordinators, and ten A.I.D.P. teachers were interviewed. Of the 200 randomly selected students, 147 (73.5 percent) completed questionnaires.

An O.E.A. consultant also reviewed the literature from the last 20 years on dropout predictor variables and on dropout prevention efforts to determine whether the design of the A.I.D.P. program was consistent with the practices recommended in the literature.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

PREDICTOR VARIABLES

A review of research from the 1960's, 1970's, and early 1980's reveals that the most accurate predictors of who will drop out of high school are measures of academic performance. For example, one retrospective study by Titone (1981) found that 90 percent of all high school dropouts nationwide had been retained in grade at least once and 60 percent had been retained at least twice. Other studies found that low elementary-school reading and math achievement scores (Hirano-Nakanishi, 1982; Fonvielle, 1983) and grades in reading, mathematics, and social studies (Anderson, 1974) were the most accurate predictors of who would drop out of high school.

The discrepancy in academic performance between potential dropouts and potential graduates increases with grade level; therefore, the further along a child is in school the more likely it is that one can predict who will drop out using these variables. A consideration of behavioral characteristics can increase the accuracy of prediction. Studies of junior high and high school students found that absences, disciplinary referrals and suspensions, and number of classes cut were significant predictors of high school outcomes (Cottle, 1975; Beard, 1978; Hammontree, 1978; Hirano-Nakanishi and Diaz, 1982; Curtis et al., 1983; and Fonvielle, 1983).

Studies of children in the primary grades have looked retrospectively at other characteristics of high school dropouts which remain stable across time and can be used as "at-risk" indicators as early as kindergarten.

Many studies found a relationship between the probability of dropping out and the educational attainment of parents (Kowalski and Cangemi, 1974; Kaplan and Luch, 1977; Hewitt and Johnson, 1979; and Hill, 1979). The lower the educational level of the parents, and in particular of the father, the more likely the child is to drop out. This may be related to the finding that parental apathy and lack of involvement with the school typifies at-risk students (Cottle, 1975; Beard 1978; and Dade County, 1984). Parents who feel either intimidated by or alienated from schools because of their own experience might exert less pressure on their children to stay in school.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERVENTION

Several studies included evaluations of intervention programs and recommendations for future programs. All of the studies reviewed recommend that students be identified and receive services in elementary and junior high school. The authors are critical of school systems that have dropout prevention programs only at the high school level. Other general recommendations include segregation of at-risk students into mini-schools in order to create more favorable learning conditions through staff training in special teaching techniques, smaller student to staff ratios, and modified curricula. Most of the studies agree that: school and class attendance should be monitored daily and absences responded to immediately; disciplinary procedures should be clearly stated and explained to students and problems should be handled by a counseling team; and parents must become involved in their children's education through parent outreach programs.

Specific program recommendations include the following:

- Student Selection Criteria: As noted above, the studies recommend intervention no later than the junior high school level (Beard et al., 1978; Curtis et al., 1983; Fonvielle 1983; and Griffin et al., 1984) and several stress that identification should begin in elementary school (Hirano-Nakanishi and Diaz, 1982; Curtis et al., 1983). Recommended selection criteria include academic failure, poor school attendance, number of disciplinary referrals, and parental indifference (Beard et al., 1978; Griffin et al., 1984).
- Staff: Several studies recommend a small student to staff ratio (no more than 15 students per teacher), with teachers and counselors chosen on the basis of years of successful experience (Beard et al., 1978; Cinal, 1982; Dade County, 1984; and Griffin et al., 1984). In-service training in basic skills curriculum, specialized teaching techniques, and behavior management strategies is stressed. Beard et al. (1978) further suggest continuous monitoring of teachers to determine that specialized techniques are being used appropriately.
- Curriculum: It is generally agreed that basic skills should be stressed, with an emphasis on reading comprehension and language arts (Beard et al., 1978; Titone, 1981; Cinal, 1982; Fonvielle, 1983; and Dade County, 1984). Beard et al. (1978) recommend a mastery learning curriculum which includes extensive pre- and posttesting, individualized learning plans, and structured long- and short-term goals designed to minimize failure experiences for the student. They further recommend career-awareness classes. Students who have difficulty academically should be provided with tutoring and increased academic support. With proper training and supervision, parents and teacher aides have been used very successfully as tutors (Beard et al., 1978).
- Counseling: Regular and mandatory counseling for educational, vocational, and personal adjustment problems should be provided for students. Increased parent involvement through parent education and direct outreach via phone calls and home visits is stressed as a primary function of the counseling staff (Beard et al., 1978; Cinal, 1982; and Hirano-Nakanishi and Diaz, 1982).
- Community Involvement: A school-community coordinator who serves as a liaison to parents and to community organizations can be used both to enhance outreach to parents and to augment the career awareness component of a program (Beard et al., 1978).

- Evaluation: Many of the studies reviewed (Beard et al., 1978; Cinal, 1982; Hirano-Nakanishi and Diaz, 1982; Fonvielle, 1983; Dade County, 1984; and Griffin et al., 1984) noted the poor record-keeping procedures of the programs being evaluated and specifically recommend that record-keeping procedures be carefully thought out and standardized. It is essential to assess what effect a program is having and which practices are most successful in addressing the problem.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Several intervention strategies suggested in the literature were not included in the A.I.D.P. program. A.I.D.P. services were to supplement school services and were not intended to change students' regular programs. Therefore, changing the structure and curriculum of the classroom did not fall within the province of the program. Program staff could not form mini-schools for the selected students or change basic skills curricula and teacher training. The program also did not include elementary students in 1985-86 although they had been included in 1984-85.

Nevertheless, many of the recommendations made in the literature were addressed in the guidelines for the A.I.D.P. program. Several of the variables that were found to characterize dropouts were used in selecting students for the program. Number of absences, days late, and classes cut were used as indicators of poor school attendance. Reading scores on the California Achievement Test and number of course failures in the spring of 1985 were used as indicators of academic failure. Middle school students were made a primary focus of the program.

Intervention practices also reflected findings in the literature. The Chancellor's guidelines called for regular and mandatory counseling for all A.I.D.P. students, for daily monitoring of students' attendance and follow up on absences with telephone calls to parents and home visits, and for an increased effort to involve parents and community organizations. The guidelines also provided for career education for all A.I.D.P. students and gave schools the option of providing academic tutoring in an after-school program. O.S.P. designed uniform record-keeping procedures and reviewed program records on a regular basis.

The descriptions of model practices in this report represent the fullest implementation of the intervention strategies recommended in the literature and the program guidelines in this year's A.I.D.P. program.

III. MODEL SITES

OVERALL MODEL SITES

O.E.A. evaluators visited four sites that O.S.P. assistants designated as model programs over all components. These sites shared certain general characteristics that appeared to contribute to their success. Of primary importance was the quality of the program personnel. The staff to whom O.E.A. evaluators spoke and those they observed were creative and dedicated people willing to work long hours, often beyond those required of them. They were sincerely concerned about the problems of the students and were available when students needed to talk to them. Students responded well to their demonstrations of concern; at all four overall model sites more than 50 percent of the students who answered the question, "Which adult at the school do you feel you can talk to best?" named one of the A.I.D.P. staff.

Despite their genuine desire to respond to students' needs staff often found themselves facing problems with which they had no previous experience and feeling uncertain about how to proceed. In two districts (which included three of the four overall model sites) all district facilitators met biweekly to share their experiences and frustrations and to discuss the best way of administering the program. These districts also held biweekly meetings of all the A.I.D.P. family and SAPIS workers with discussion sessions and presentations by specialists. These opportunities for peer consultation and on-going training allowed staff to function more effectively.

Besides these district-wide meetings, on-site staff noted the importance of their own program meetings. They formed attendance and guidance teams that met daily to report on individual cases and to plan activities. In this way they avoided duplicating or omitting services and ensured that every team member knew something about every case. Staff found that working in a team made them feel less isolated and more confident in dealing with the difficult situations that arose. Students and parents also had a greater number of informed staff to turn to for information and help.

As staff worked together over time a sense of program identity also grew. They came to view the A.I.D.P. program as "their" program. Although a number of staff members reported feeling initial skepticism about the success of the program, by January almost all of them expressed a strong belief that they could significantly lessen the problems experienced by students at risk of dropping out. This sense of ownership, and the feeling that the success or failure of the program was largely in their hands, reinforced their commitment to it.

Identification with the program extended to the students as well. A sense of being part of something grew through their interactions with the staff and their small group activities. The facilitator's office became a place to come in their free time, the A.I.D.P. teachers became "their" teachers, and they were proud of the products of their work in the A.I.D.P. enterprises and career education classes. Staff used A.I.D.P. t-shirts, caps, and bookbags to enhance this group identification. In the questionnaires, students wrote of the support they

received from A.I.D.P. staff and the other students in the program, and some students said their involvement with the A.I.D.P. community replaced their involvement with the "street" community. For example, students wrote:

- If it wasn't for the program I might be in the streets right now. I hope that every one in the program does as well as I did.
- (What I like best about the program was) all of us being together. Because we could talk about things that only the group will keep to itself.
- (What I like best about the program was) having teacher (sic) that care very much for me and my education.
- When I came to the program I made alot of friends that are now very close to me and no enemys (sic).

Other students in the school viewed the A.I.D.P. group positively and often wanted to be part of the program.

The growth of a group identity often brings a concomitant growth in insularity; however, this did not appear to happen at these sites. On the contrary, program staff reported relying heavily on support from outside their group. In large part this was due to the immediacy and effectiveness with which different levels of administration responded to requests for information or help. Just as students knew they could depend on staff members to listen to and respond to their needs, staff knew that school, district, and central offices would respond to theirs.

Responsiveness at the school level was determined primarily by the attitude of the principal. Principals at model sites fully supported the program and indicated that they were involved in all aspects of it

through Pupil Personnel Committee meetings and regular informal meetings with A.I.D.P. staff. Principals lent considerable prestige to the program by visiting and joining in program activities, by allocating sufficient working space, and by participating in designing the program. They could smooth the way when obstacles arose. They helped keep non-A.I.D.P. staff informed of the purpose and importance of the program, thus lessening the resentment that can often arise among non-program staff when such staff feel a program is being foisted on them. Principals also freed personnel and resources for program use. In general, a program sanctioned by the principal, and which he or she actively supports, is valued more by staff and students alike and has a greater chance of success.

District support was evident at three of the overall model sites in the allocation of district personnel to coordinate the program. One district (in which two sites were designated as overall model sites and each of the other sites had at least one model component) assigned a full-time coordinator; one district assigned a half-time coordinator. The quality and commitment of these personnel were high. Both coordinators worked long hours and spent a great deal of time at the schools assisting with administrative tasks, program design, and implementation. They served as liaisons between central offices, the district office, and school staff, and were able to clear up many of the communication problems experienced in other districts. Through biweekly meetings and through their frequent visits to all sites in their districts, district coordinators learned about and saw effective practices in action and

could share information among staff on how these were implemented. Coordinators worked with other district staff as well so that, for example, guidance and attendance efforts were also supported by the district guidance and attendance offices.

O.S.P. is the central office responsible for monitoring the program and for providing technical assistance and support to the on site personnel. O.S.P. assistants visited each of these ten model sites on a monthly basis (as they did all A.I.D.P. schools) and were available as needed to respond to requests for help. They, like the district coordinators, were able to share information on effective practices observed at other sites as well as give hands-on help in implementing these practices. Staff and district coordinators gave O.S.P. assistants the highest ratings in terms of the usefulness of their input and their availability.

Each of these four sites also had specific model practices within each component. These practices are described in the appropriate sections below.

FACILITATION

O.E.A. evaluators visited two sites that O.S.P. assistants designated as having model facilitation and four sites designated as having a model Pupil Personnel Committee. Evaluators interviewed facilitators and Pupil Personnel Committee members at these sites and reviewed minutes from committee meetings.

Facilitator

The quality of the facilitation of the program was determined primarily by the commitment and effectiveness of the facilitator. Princi-

pals at these sites reported choosing as facilitators those teachers who had a demonstrated ability to work with school staff, parents, and students; who were hard-working and willing to work beyond their allotted hours; and who had experience with problem students and related well to them. Principals described facilitators as creative, intelligent, dynamic, and "projecting a positive self image and program image."

The major difficulty in facilitating the program at all sites was the limitation set on the facilitator's time. Facilitators were funded for only two periods a day and therefore had to fill some other function for the rest of the day. Besides the difficulty of completing the facilitator's work in just two periods a day, there was also the problem that the facilitator frequently was not available for program duties when needed. Staff at every visited site complained about the lack of flexibility and the limited time allotted to the facilitator.

The two model facilitation sites dealt with the problem by combining the job of facilitator (a .4 position) and A.I.D.P. career education teacher (a .6 position). Therefore, although the facilitator's job was a part-time position, these facilitators were involved with the program full time and were not restricted to specific periods for performing administrative duties. They both felt that this arrangement allowed the flexibility that was essential for administering the program.

Still, both facilitators reported spending more than two periods a day on facilitation because they did much more than complete the required paperwork. They met with students individually, talked to parents, met with program and school staff to plan activities or discuss individual students, coordinated the high school linkage and after-school programs,

and supervised the attendance staff. As a result, they either completed A.I.D.P. work during their free time or during the time allocated for other duties. It took an exceptional effort to complete the work of the facilitator as well as that of another .6 position.

Training and Support

One district with a model facilitator scheduled regular meetings with all of the facilitators in the district. Facilitators used these meetings to solve problems, to share and learn from each others' successes and failures, and to get support when the frustrations of the job seemed overwhelming. The model facilitator in this district felt the administration of his program was enhanced by this collaboration.

Pupil Personnel Committee

The Pupil Personnel Committee is the primary vehicle for coordinating the A.I.D.P. program with the school. When the committee worked effectively it enhanced the school-wide programs as well as the A.I.D.P. program. In the four sites with model pupil personnel committees, the group met at least twice a month and discussed every aspect of the program. Members held brain-storming sessions for planning the program, discussed the cases of individual students, conducted their own evaluation of the program by gathering attendance and academic statistics, and worked out solutions to specific implementation problems. These committees included non-A.I.D.P. staff who represented the school administration and the staff of related attendance or guidance programs; they provided a forum for coordinating the efforts of different programs and for giving recognition and praise to the staff. Attendance was high at every meeting.

ATTENDANCE OUTREACH

Staff Training

O.E.A. evaluators visited three of the sites designated by O.S.P. assistants as having model attendance-outreach teams, and four of the sites designated as having a model attendance-incentive program. Evaluators spoke to the facilitator, family or neighborhood workers, school aides, and school attendance personnel at each of these sites.

Family workers, neighborhood workers, and school aides are frequently the first people from a school to contact the families of students. They reported that, during their initial phone calls or visits to families, issues often arise that require sensitive handling and extensive follow-up. The impression that is made on parents during these contacts can color all succeeding interactions with the school. These personnel also have conversations with students about their reasons for not attending school and often have to respond to student concerns about drugs, sex, and family relations. Many family workers, neighborhood workers, and school aides at sites that did not have model attendance practices said they felt poorly prepared for dealing with these situations and that they received little support or training in this work.

At one of the sites with a model attendance-outreach team, the district coordinator recognized this need for training. Family workers from every A.I.D.P. program in the district (as well as SAPIS workers who also made home contacts) met biweekly with both the district coordinator and a child psychologist. The psychologist, who volunteered his

time for the project, led group discussions on such topics as adolescent sexuality and parent contact. O.E.A. evaluators observed the session on parent contact. It was a lively discussion during which the family workers and SAPIS workers brought up incidents in which they had been involved, raising the following issues:

- how to convince a student who is making money selling drugs that it is important to return to school;
- how to get teachers involved with the parents;
- how to help parents set limits with their children;
- how to set up parent workshops that are attractive and useful to parents; and
- how to allow a child to show anger while not allowing disrespect.

The participants received guidance from the group leaders and feedback from their colleagues. All participants were invited to observe a parent workshop that immediately followed it. The family workers to whom O.E.A. evaluators spoke found this opportunity useful for sharing experiences and frustrations, receiving feedback, and observing others.

In the other sites with model outreach programs, staff training was conducted at the school level using a team approach to attendance outreach. All A.I.D.P. attendance staff met daily with either the facilitator or the guidance personnel to discuss individual cases and to decide on follow-up. This arrangement provided family and neighborhood workers and school aides with help in deciding how to respond to a case and in evaluating the effectiveness of their actions.

Team Approach

The team approach was a feature of all of the programs with model attendance outreach components. Teams generally included two family workers, a school aide, and either a guidance person or the facilitator. Besides the advantages of teams mentioned in the Overall Model Sites section, this allowed family workers to make home visits in pairs. As a result, family workers were less concerned about safety and felt less isolated in their work than family workers at other schools who made visits alone.

Attendance teams at these sites worked in conjunction with school-wide attendance personnel as well. Often the A.I.D.P. school aide or family worker shared an office with the attendance secretary or school family workers, and A.I.D.P. and school staff were able to work together to reach particular students.

Outreach Procedures

Sites with model attendance components had well-organized and consistent daily procedures for monitoring and responding to student absences. The procedure began at some sites with mentors, facilitators, or family workers coming in early to make wake-up calls to particular students. At one site the school aide programmed the autodialer to make wake-up calls. At all of the model outreach sites the school aide, working in conjunction with the school attendance team, would receive the attendance records of homeroom teachers by 9:00 or 9:30 every morning and would transfer this information to the A.I.D.P. logs. If an autodialer was available, any A.I.D.P. absentee was immediately

programmed into the machine by the school aide. If the school did not have an autodialer, the school aide would either call the absentee's home or refer the matter to the family worker for follow-up. The same procedure was followed after lunch. If a student continued to miss school or if there was another reason to be concerned about a student, attendance staff members would make a home visit.

These schools placed a strong emphasis on home visits. The principal at one school reported that the district mandated that neighborhood workers make ten home visits a day. While he acknowledged that this was sometimes unrealistic he noted that because he placed a high priority on these visits this quota was usually met and often exceeded. This school had an excellent relationship with a community based organization which provided two community mental health workers to help with visits. As a result, in January alone, 136 home visits were made.

Record-Keeping

The facilitator at one site put all of his attendance records on a personal computer. At the beginning of the year he spent one or two days training family workers to enter data on the computer and helped them enter basic identifying data on each student. Thereafter, family workers would spend approximately 20 minutes of each day entering the following on each student: services received, points gained towards incentive rewards, daily attendance, money earned in an enterprise, subjects passed and failed each quarter and anecdotal data from teacher conferences, home visits, and student conferences. If any staff member wanted information on a student, updated information was immediately

available. This facilitated follow-up with students and completion of monthly records. Both the facilitator and the family workers said that this system greatly reduced the amount of time required for paperwork and freed their time to provide other services.

Incentives

Model incentive programs had three characteristics in common. First, these programs were well-organized. There were clearly stated criteria for rewards and carefully maintained records of student progress towards meeting the criteria. In one case these records were publicly displayed so students could follow their own progress. Generally the criteria were the same for all students, but at one site each student had a contract with the guidance counselor in which individual academic, attendance, and program participation goals were stated.

Second, these programs included some incentives that were given in increments, with a year-long build up to better and better rewards, and some that were rewarded on a monthly basis. For example, at one site students were given points for attendance, academic performance, and participation in an enterprise or a mentor activity. Students who earned 100 points became members of the Ruby Club and received an A.I.D.P. book bag and cap. Students who earned 125 points then became members of the Pearl Club and were allowed to attend an end-of-the-year A.I.D.P. awards banquet. Students who continued on to earn 135 points were allowed to go on the year-end trip to Bear Mountain. Finally, students who earned 150 points could attend a lunch at Mama Leone's and a Broadway play. There were also incentives for short-term improvement.

Students could become members of the Attendance Hall of Fame if their monthly attendance was 90 percent or better, the trip of the month club if their attendance was 93 percent or better, and the MacDonald's gift certificate club if it was 100 percent. Similar clubs existed for attendance in the mentor program and for academic performance.

The third characteristic of model incentive programs was that the rewards were valued by the students. A wide variety of items, activities, and awards were attractive to them including movie coupons, books, radios, calculators, and audio cassettes. Students also enjoyed special activities like breakfasts and dinners, movies, and trips. Public recognition, including honor rolls, Hall of Fame, banquets, and Student of the Month awards, also motivated students.

School-Staff Relations

In almost all schools, A.I.D.P. staff noted that regular staff resented the fact that rewards were being given to "bad kids" while students who had consistently attended school and had average or better grades were being ignored. A.I.D.P. staff often agreed with this criticism of the program. However, one principal did not have this problem at his school. He already had incentives in place for all students for academic performance, attendance, and participation in extracurricular activities. He was able to supplement this school-wide incentive system with 20 percent of the A.I.D.P. money allocated for incentives. The part of the A.I.D.P. incentive program directed solely at truants was just another piece added to the school-wide system. As a result, teachers did not resent the attention given to truant students.

GUIDANCE

O.E.A. evaluators visited five of the sites designated by O.S.P. assistants as having model guidance practices. Evaluators interviewed guidance counselors, SAPIS workers, and teacher mentors. Whenever possible, they observed guidance activities.

Team Approach

Four of the five model sites provided guidance and support services using a team approach. The team was comprised of a senior guidance person and several other staff members. Aspects of guidance teams included collaboration among staff members, frequent meetings and case conferences, group training sessions, and team visits to the home. In one school a full-time guidance counselor, a .33 social worker, and a full-time family worker shared the same office. The guidance counselor was responsible for coordinating A.I.D.P. activities and conducting student group sessions. The social worker and family worker made home visits together, provided students and their parents with individual counseling and follow-up, and participated in the student groups when they were in the office. Information about all students was immediately shared. The guidance counselor also met regularly with non-A.I.D.P. guidance personnel from school-based programs such as Substance Abuse Prevention and Program Alternatives to Special Education in order to share resources and avoid duplicating services to students who were in more than one of these programs. At another site the SAPIS worker was responsible for coordinating guidance activities, supervising two family workers, and working closely with the school guidance counselor. This district

conducted biweekly staff development sessions for family workers and SAPIS workers. (See Model Attendance section.)

Although family workers are not guidance personnel, the guidance staff felt it was important to include them on these teams. They provided valuable information from their home visits and contacts with parents to the guidance staff. In return, guidance staff trained family workers in dealing with situations they encountered during these contacts and in assessing when to make referrals to mental health workers.

Collaboration with Community Based Organizations

One model guidance site collaborated with a community-based organization (C.B.O.) with which it had a long-standing relationship. The A.I.D.P. program enabled the C.B.O. to place more staff in the school and to provide more services to the targeted students. C.B.O. and program staff worked as a team providing counseling regarding personal, family, and career issues, and making referrals to mental health agencies. The C.B.O. provided the team with two full-time mental health workers, a part-time psychologist, and a part-time trainer-coordinator who supervised the team's work. The school provided the team with two family workers. The facilitator, an extended day teacher, and the school guidance counselor worked closely with this team providing additional services to the students.

There were many opportunities for staff to interact with and support each other in this program. Family workers traveled together or with a mental health worker when making home visits. At the school, the family workers, school aide, mental health workers and psychologists shared a large room where they could exchange information and where

students could drop in throughout the day. All staff, supervised by the trainer-coordinator met formally every week to discuss individual cases (case management) and plan program strategy.

One advantage of this collaboration was the high level of training and experience of the C.B.O. staff and their ability to provide appropriate supervision to other guidance staff. The trainer-coordinator and the mental health workers had master's degrees in social work. While the trainer-coordinator oversaw the entire staff, the psychologist supervised the mental health workers and the mental health workers supervised the family workers. As a result of the professional level of supervision afforded to family workers, they were able to do more than simply inform parents of student absences. They provided support and informal counseling to parents and visited the homes of high-risk students or families in crisis on a regular basis. They were trained to refer to the mental health workers any problem that was beyond the scope of their expertise.

This guidance team was able to serve a large number of students on a regular basis. The mental health workers each saw 30 students individually and in small groups on a weekly basis. The psychologist made case assessments and saw four or five students requiring a more clinical approach. The family workers each maintained a caseload of about 75 students, regularly making home visits and providing support. Because the C.B.O. had direct connections with other C.B.O.'s and social service agencies, they also were able to facilitate outside referrals and to follow up on them.

Finally, while school staff suspend their services over the summer, C.B.O. staff work year-round and they expected to maintain contact with A.I.D.P. students in the summer. During the year they also were available for longer hours than school staff, working with students until 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening.

Mentor and Small-Group Activities

According to staff, A.I.D.P. students tended to have histories of poor social relations and family problems and to feel isolated in school. In addition, many of them found the transition from elementary schools to large departmentalized middle schools an alienating experience. In an effort to counteract this, many model A.I.D.P. programs attempted to promote a sense of community through small-group activities. These activities also provided staff with a framework for establishing rapport with students and gaining their trust.

One school accomplished this through task-oriented teacher-mentor activities. This school had an overall policy of providing high-interest classes before school in order to keep students interested in coming and to help the students form relationships with staff members. Students could attend juggling, theatre, body-building, and many other classes in the morning. Mentors fit into this larger school program and provided classes in photography, video-taping, and button making. The success of these activities in creating a group identity appeared to be as much a function of the attraction students felt for the teachers as for the type of activity. Mentors at this school were dynamic and popular teachers who had some experience as counselors.

Mentors used classes to teach and reinforce a number of skills and attitudes. One mentor who was also a drug counselor used the photography and video-taping classes which he taught to reinforce basic skills, to get to know the students better, to help improve their self concepts, and to teach promptness. Many of the tasks were cooperative so that students had to depend on each other to complete them. Mentors at this school felt that the enthusiasm students had for this early morning program and the approaches they learned in the classes carried over into the regular school day.

Some model sites used career awareness activities to counsel small groups of students. At one site a social worker established a job club during lunch and after school for several of her A.I.D.P. counselees. At another school the guidance counselor was also the career education teacher and she used small-group career education activities as a springboard for discussion of other personal and academic issues. In both cases students had a chance to act in a supportive role with others and could associate their participation in the group with career training instead of with poor attendance or other negative labels.

Facilitators also promoted group identity. At one school small groups of students began to meet in the facilitator's office because of her demonstrated interest in them and her open-door policy. As a result of these kinds of activities, students could form positive and personal relationships with teachers and groups of their peers.

Parent Workshops

Parent workshops were an important component of successful guidance programs. Workshops were usually conducted by guidance counselors but included other staff such as social workers, family workers, facilitators, and staff from C.B.O.'s. They took the form of open discussions about program issues such as effective use of trips and incentives, or structured presentations on parenting skills, communication, and discipline. Sometimes, prepared materials such as video tapes were used.

Many schools had difficulty getting parents to attend. Schools with model practices used a wide range of incentives to increase their attendance. One model site, where the A.I.D.R. population included a large number of hotel residents, offered parents a \$5.00 stipend to attend. They used A.I.D.P. students to provide childcare during the workshop, and to serve coffee and snacks. Parents brought up gripes, suggestions, and questions about the services their children were receiving from A.I.D.P. and the facilitator and guidance counselor responded, noting which parents required individual follow-up conferences.

A second site invited parents on student trips in the hopes that involvement in one activity would lead to involvement in other activities. One parent at this school became so enthusiastic about the program after one trip that she began to recruit other parents to participate in the workshops.

Both of these sites offered workshops on topics of interest and practical value to parents. These included workshops on procedures to obtain working papers and a social security number, ways to be "street

wise" and avoid being attacked, and salary and educational requirements of possible careers.

HEALTH

O.S.P. assistants designated only one site as having a model health component. O.E.A. evaluators visited this site and spoke to the Health Resource Coordinator (H.R.C.). However, no activities took place the day of the visit and so health activities were not observed.

Coordination of Services

This was the H.R.C.'s first year at this site, and she divided her time between two junior high schools, spending only one day a week at this site. Nevertheless, she felt she had established an effective working relationship with the A.I.D.P. staff. She met with all staff on a biweekly basis in the Pupil Personnel Committee meetings as well as with both the facilitator and the guidance counselor on an informal basis every day she was in the school.

Extent of Services

The H.R.C. felt her job included more than reviewing records and referring students for physical examinations. She was concerned with educating students about bodies and health and with seeing that students had access to a wide array of physical and mental health services. Therefore, in addition to providing the usual services of reviewing student records, referring students for physical examinations, and following up on referrals, she made home visits to speak to parents and to investigate claims of medical problems, provided individual counseling to students on health issues, and ran special programs including

non-smoking "rap" sessions, lectures on nutrition, and exercise classes. The H.R.C. also worked with the guidance counselor to make referrals for mental health services.

Although the H.R.C. served the entire junior high school population she reported devoting three to four hours each week to the A.I.D.P. students. She saw about 20 A.I.D.P. students and spoke to between 10 and 15 parents of the A.I.D.P. students every week.

SCHOOL LEVEL LINKAGE

O.E.A. evaluators visited three of the sites designated by O.S.P. assistants as having a model linkage component. At each site they interviewed the middle school facilitator and observed the linkage activity in the high school.

High School Liaison

Although the linkage programs between each middle school and high school were different, an involved and informed high school liaison was an essential part of all three. Each of the linked high schools had a designated staff member who acted as a liaison to the middle school. This high school staff member helped plan the orientations and, by the time the orientations took place, knew which students to expect and had an organized agenda.

Selected High Schools

The Chancellor's Office assigned each middle school to a high school. In most cases the selection was based on feeder patterns of the middle schools and school proximity. At some sites not designated as having a model linkage component, the selected high schools were

inappropriate to the needs of the middle school, as when a middle school was linked to a high school that was far away and required excessive travel time.

In two of the model sites, the linkage programs took place in high schools near the middle school. Each high school was the zoned high school for the middle school students and therefore was the school where they were most likely to be accepted. In one case, the middle school already had an established relationship with the high school which smoothed the way for a more comprehensive linkage program.

Members of the Pupil Personnel Committee at another middle school that had been linked to a neighborhood high school felt it was important for their students to visit more than one high school. The facilitator took students on tours of many different high schools, with different vocational strengths. This gave younger students a sense of the choices open to them concerning high schools and gave older students, who may already have been accepted to one of these high schools, a preview of the fall.

Orientations

Two of the linkage programs were orientation programs. Students generally visited high schools in groups of 10 to 15, though on occasion the visiting group included as many as 40 students. The agenda for the visits were similar. Middle school students went on a tour of the high school, paying particular attention to the vocational classes in which the high school had a noted strength. These included: computer programming, nursing, child care, mechanical drawing, food services, and business skills. In addition, students observed academic classes in

specialized areas including dance and choreography, legal studies, and advanced chemistry. In many of these classes, teachers and/or students gave a brief talk about the class. After the tour, the high school liaison or high school students handed out written information about the high school and answered questions. At one school, students in the high school A.I.D.P. program gave personal testimonials to the importance of attending high school. At another school, the middle school students were invited to lunch with the high school students.

Although the middle school students were given many opportunities to participate and ask questions, they were generally reticent. One facilitator dealt with this reticence by taking the group to MacDonald's after the orientation so they could talk among themselves and with the middle school facilitator and guidance counselor who had accompanied them to the high school.

Joint Activities

In the third school the linkage program took a different form. The high school offered after-school classes in which the middle school students could participate along with high school students. Classes included entrepreneurship, cosmetology, and business and office skills. The classes met twice a week for four weeks. Students from the middle school attended in groups of ten and were joined at the high school by other middle school students as well as high school students. The classroom structure did not lend itself to much interaction among the various students. However, the middle school students blended easily with the high school students and attending the high school classes seemed to demystify the high school experience.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Career Awareness

O.E.A. evaluators visited four of the sites identified by O.S.P. assistants as having model career awareness practices. Evaluators spoke to the career education teacher at each site and observed career awareness activities at two of the sites.

Because A.I.D.P. students were not targeted for the program until after the school year began, students were not programmed for career awareness classes. Students had to be pulled out of minor subjects to participate. As a result, one of the greatest problems in the career awareness component was scheduling the students and giving them enough instructional time without interfering with their regular class schedule.

At all four model sites, career education teachers were able to develop regular career awareness schedules for students despite these difficulties. Every A.I.D.P. student was scheduled for either a group or individual career awareness session at least once every week. Teachers relied on the support of the principal to accomplish this.

At three of these sites the career education teacher (a .6 position) was also the facilitator (a .4 position). At the fourth site the career education teacher (a .5 position) was also the guidance counselor for the program (a .5 position). As a result, these people were involved full time in the program and had greater flexibility in scheduling their career awareness activities than part-time career education teachers who also had non-A.I.D.P. duties.

Most of the career awareness programs focused on classroom instruction about jobs and high school selection. However, emphasis differed from site to site. At two sites, career awareness was viewed as a guidance activity focusing on the needs of individual students. The career education teacher met with students in small groups but placed emphasis on helping each student identify his or her own strengths and weaknesses. She helped them use this information in choosing high schools and careers. Another career education teacher was interested in integrating reading and language arts instruction with career education and taught reading lessons using pamphlets about careers and problems students might encounter on the job. One teacher emphasized field trips to businesses and high schools. For example, groups of students visited the Stock Exchange, the Museum of Broadcasting, the New York Times, Kennedy Airport, and Queens Vocational High School.

The career education teacher at one of these schools received on-site training from the City-wide Articulation Program (C.A.P.), an office under the auspices of O.S.P. C.A.P. sent a career education specialist to the site for six weeks to teach classes and to help the A.I.D.P. career education teacher develop a curriculum and materials for continuing the class after the specialist left. The career education teacher, who was also the facilitator and previously had been a physical education teacher, had little training in teaching career education. He was very positive about the experience of working with the career education specialist and the opportunity for further training.

Work-study

One school provided a work-study program in which a small number of A.I.D.P. students were placed at one of two neighborhood day-care centers one afternoon a week. Under the supervision of the day-care staff, students rotated through several job assignments. On some days they worked in the office filing, answering phones, and performing other administrative tasks. On other days they worked in the cafeteria helping with food preparation and service. The bulk of their time, however, was spent with the toddlers, escorting them on trips, reading to them, or playing with them.

The work study program was very popular with students. One boy reported that the only drawback of the A.I.D.P. program was the fact that he found saying goodbye to the toddlers painful when his work assignment ended. The staff at the day-care center greatly appreciated the assistance they were receiving from A.I.D.P. students and in return helped them apply for paying summer jobs.

Enterprise

O.E.A. evaluators visited three of the sites that O.S.P. assistants designated as having model enterprises. They interviewed the facilitator and enterprise teachers at each site and observed enterprise activities taking place.

The enterprise program also was adversely affected by the late selection of targeted students. Many sites had difficulty implementing an enterprise as a pull-out program. These three sites dealt with the difficulty in two different ways. At two of the sites the enterprise

was run as an after-school, before-school, or lunchtime program. These enterprise teachers received per-session payment. At the third site the A.I.D.P. students were all scheduled into regular shop classes with non-A.I.D.P. students. The enterprise was taught as part of the regular shop program, and the A.I.D.P. career education teacher monitored the work of A.I.D.P. students in the shop and gave them extra help when needed.

These schools had from one to four enterprises operating at a time. Some examples of successful enterprises are described below.

School Store. One site operated a school store before school, during lunch, and after school. An extended-day home economics teacher began this enterprise by meeting with approximately 40 students in the afternoon and baking cookies. These were sold to other students in the school. With the profits from the sales students were able to buy other items to sell, including hot dogs, small grooming articles, and school supplies. The A.I.D.P. program purchased a small oven and a cash register and students were trained to operate them. Students elected four of their members to serve as a board. These students were responsible for scheduling work assignments, shopping for supplies, and recommending improvements for the store.

O.E.A. evaluators observed the store in operation during lunch. Two to four students could run the store under the supervision of one teacher. One student ran the cash register, two dealt with customers, and one controlled entry into the small room serving as the store. At the end of the period the students were responsible for counting and

checking the money against the cash register tally. Students were paid according to their participation and were penalized if the money collected did not match the tally. At least two dollars of each paycheck had to be deposited in bank accounts that students had opened with the teacher's assistance.

Auto-Magic. The same site operated another enterprise during lunch in which students washed the cars of school staff and did minor mechanical repairs, including installation of the third brake light. During inclement weather they were taught basic auto mechanics. An O.E.A. evaluator observed one lunch period in which nine students washed several cars. The activity was well-organized by the supervising teacher, and students took their work seriously.

Students in Auto-Magic also opened bank accounts and received a share of the profits according to their participation. (However, 20 percent of all profits was kept to pay for supplies.) Continued participation in the activity was dependent upon grades; students whose grades fell were placed on work probation until they improved.

The facilitator at this site reported that he had a very committed group of teachers running the enterprises who put in a minimum of five extra hours each week. Teachers were willing to work during their lunch periods and occasionally to take work home.

Button-making. One site operated an enterprise before school in which students designed, made, and sold buttons to other students in the school. This enterprise was one of a number of morning classes through which students rotated. Skills learned in one class could be expanded

in another. For instance, one student was taught calligraphy and used it in designing buttons. He became so proficient that the school helped him get outside orders for calligraphy jobs.

Shop. The third site placed all A.I.D.P. students in regular shop classes with non-A.I.D.P. students. This school was committed to having a strong program and had expert personnel and fully-equipped metal, wood, print, and home economics shops. In one shop, non-A.I.D.P. students made metal products while A.I.D.P. students produced plastic products including key chains, picture frames, and pen holders. These were sold before school three days a week in the Plastic Boutique. In the wood-working shop, A.I.D.P. students made napkin holders, candle holders, clocks, and other items to order. A.I.D.P. students in the print shop produced a bimonthly newspaper using a computer program called the Newsroom and sold it for five cents a copy. Finally, A.I.D.P. students in the home economics shop made baked goods for sale, and once a week operated a morning breakfast service for teachers. The A.I.D.P. program provided a .6 career education teacher who worked in the shops with larger numbers of A.I.D.P. students to provide instructional support.

Extended Day Program

O.S.P. assistants designated one site as having a model extended-day program. O.E.A. evaluators observed the after-school program and interviewed after-school teachers at this site as well as another site designated by O.S.P. as having an overall model A.I.D.P. program.

Both sites visited by O.E.A. were notable for the number of students who attended the after-school program. In one case, the facilitator of the program remarked that he expected no fewer than 95 students to attend the after-school activities. In fact, 115 students congregated in the large common room for snacks before breaking up into smaller groups. At least eight adults, including several extended-day teachers, the facilitator, the family worker, and the P.T.A. president, could be counted in the common room at any one time, helping to maintain order and see to the equitable distribution of the snacks. The A.I.D.P. school aide was stationed at the main exit both to prevent students from leaving the building and as a security measure. In the second school, students also had to sign in at a central location before breaking into smaller groups. On the day of the observation, approximately 50 students attended.

In both programs, the small group activities were very appealing to students. One school's activities included bilingual academic help, mathematics remediation, computers, aerobic dance, and art. Several students also went off-site for photography classes. Students at this site carried an after-school schedule card which listed the activity to which the student was assigned, helping both the students and staff to know where the student should be on any given day. Schedules were changed several times a year to ensure that students rotated through different activities. The second school had similar high-interest activities as well as a "club house", a social center where students could play games, work on independent projects, and talk.

Another common feature of these sites was the popularity and appeal of the teachers in the extended-day program. In general, they were dynamic teachers interested in the activities in which they were involved. Liked and respected by students, these teachers were able to maintain classroom order, with few discipline problems.

Finally, an effective incentive in both programs was the quality of the snacks provided to the students after school. At one site, students received juice and ham sandwiches prepared by one of the extended-day teachers. This teacher occasionally cooked hot meals, especially around holidays. At the second site, one member of the after-school team went to MacDonald's and purchased snacks for all the students who had signed in. These were handed out at the end of the day.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The Chancellor's Office developed comprehensive guidelines for the 1985-86 A.I.D.P. program in an attempt to increase the effectiveness of individual school programs. These guidelines were based on the experience gained in implementing the 1984-85 A.I.D.P. program and Project Connect and included practices that monitors and on-site personnel felt had produced the best results in those programs. These practices are quite similar to those suggested in the literature on dropout prevention. The "model" sites discussed in this report were those that O.S.P. assistants felt most closely adhered to the guidelines and which implemented the suggested practices effectively. Parts of these programs have been described in detail. However, the effectiveness of these guidelines has not been experimentally explored in the New York City schools. In a second report O.E.A. will examine how effective the overall program was in improving the attendance patterns and academic achievement of targeted students and whether adherence to the guidelines did in fact result in improvement.

In their observations and interviews at ten model sites, O.E.A. evaluators observed suggested practices being implemented with energy and creativity. Although there were obstacles to overcome at every site, staff expressed optimism about the program and a belief that it was working at their school. The program was well supported at all levels of administration and a representative group of students was generally positive about the effect of the program on their behavior.

These programs were found in schools that had involved administrators who strongly supported the program. Several were in districts that allocated extra personnel and/or resources to the program. All sites received regular feedback and support from O.S.P. staff. In most of the sites a sense of program ownership and identity developed and students as well as staff believed they were part of something important. These general qualities greatly facilitated implementation of all components.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The diversity of practices described in this report attests to the fact that the guidelines were not so restrictive as to squelch creativity. Staff indicated that they felt the guidelines were generally appropriate for a dropout prevention program and addressed the major problems of students at risk of dropping out. However, they still had many recommendations to modify and improve the program. The following recommendations are culled from the interviews with O.S.P. assistants, district coordinators, school principals, school A.I.D.P. staff, and the observations of O.E.A. evaluators.

All staff recommended including students in the entering classes of middle schools in the A.I.D.P. program; many felt that elementary school students should be included. Staff felt that preventive efforts would be more effective if undertaken while behavior patterns were developing.

All district and school staff recommended greater involvement of district and school personnel in the initial planning of the program and greater flexibility in the guidelines to allow for the specific needs of different sites. Principals and facilitators felt that the limitations imposed by the guidelines prevented them from implementing or emphasizing

some activities that would have been appropriate for their school population. District personnel felt that more flexibility in allocating resources within the district would have improved the program. A positive relationship was observed between involvement in planning and the commitment of the staff to making the program work. However, O.S.P. staff noted the difficulty of monitoring a program and ensuring the appropriate use of resources in 68 different schools unless some uniform guidelines are enforced. They noted that widespread abuse of funds in the 1984-85 program had prompted the state to call for stronger guidelines.

Staff at all levels recommended streamlining the facilitator's role and either making it a full-time position or a half-time position paired with a non-teaching position. Facilitators felt they had too little time to complete paperwork, plan and supervise program activities, and work directly with students. O.E.A. evaluators noted that the problem seemed less acute when the .4 facilitator's position was combined with a position that did not require classroom teaching duties (e.g., dean or guidance counselor). These facilitators were more available to students during the school day although they still had difficulty doing the job within the allotted time.

School and district staff recommended that district training and planning sessions be held on a regular basis. Many facilitators felt isolated in running their program, feeling that they were creating "something from nothing." Innovations, such as the computerized attendance records developed by one facilitator, did not carry over to other schools. Several facilitators recommended visits to other A.I.D.P.

programs and/or information sharing sessions as ways to increase their fund of ideas and upgrade overall program quality. Family assistants felt unprepared for many of the tasks facing them and they also found that the opportunity to speak to guidance personnel and to share ideas with their peers gave them more confidence in dealing with new situations.

Staff noted that coordination of the A.I.D.P. program with other school and district programs improved program services. Principals emphasized the importance of the Pupil Personnel Committee in keeping administrators informed of program activities and needs. Facilitators mentioned that administrative assistance from the school, including secretarial time, more school aide hours, adequate office space, and phone lines significantly improved their ability to coordinate the program. Facilitators and family assistants who worked closely with school-wide and district attendance personnel found it easier to follow up on student absences. Staff coordination and communication was enhanced when staff members worked in close proximity, and many preferred working with attendance and A.I.D.P. personnel in one central office.

Many staff recommended planning activities that would encourage the growth of a group identity. Several facilitators and principals felt that this sense of community could be achieved more easily through a mini-school for A.I.D.P. students. Facilitators conceived of the mini-school as having smaller classes and more guidance personnel. A similar but less radical suggestion was to create A.I.D.P. classes within each grade. Other ways of building group identity include more

small-group and mentor activities and more time for the facilitator to work directly with groups of students.

Staff at all levels recognized the need for a greater effort to provide in-service training and/or orientation to non-A.I.D.P. staff concerning the specific problems of the program students. Classroom teachers were reported to have problems teaching and managing A.I.D.P. truant students who were brought back to the school by the program. Non-A.I.D.P. staff also resented the fact that students who had exhibited undesirable behavior in not attending school were being given rewards in the way of incentives, trips, and extra-curricular activities. An initial orientation to the program and continuing contact with teachers about individual students made teachers more accepting of these aspects of the program.

However, staff also recognized the validity of the complaint that students who had exhibited undesirable behavior were being rewarded and recommended the expansion of school-wide incentive programs to include students who had consistently performed well. One facilitator made non-A.I.D.P. students "honorary A.I.D.P. members". These students could participate in A.I.D.P. activities when their participation did not increase the expense of that activity. Another school was able to use a portion of A.I.D.P. incentive funds to enhance a school-wide incentive program that was already in place. It was recommended that schools give incentives to whole classes that had improved attendance rather than to individuals. This would have the dual effect of rewarding students who already had good attendance and using peer pressure to influence students to come to school.

Staff also recognized that many of the returning students had difficulty re-adjusting to the classroom. They recommended in-school support to help returning students re-enter the classroom with as little disruption as possible. One principal recommended establishing transition classes for returning students. Other staff recommended that tutoring and academic support be provided during the school day and in the extended day program.

Many staff recommendations concerned improvements in the alternative education component. O.S.P. assistants felt that many .6 career education teachers needed more training. On-site staff recommended setting up a career resource center within the school and giving increased time to developing work-study and summer jobs in the neighborhood. All staff agreed that the success of the extended school day rested on the quality of the personnel. Teachers who were dynamic and popular drew students to any activity in which they were involved. However, some facilitators felt that the mentors should have additional guidance training.

All staff felt that the school level linkage component needed improvement. However, recommendations were varied. Some staff felt that several visits to the zoned high school to which many of their students were likely to be accepted was the key to a successful linkage. Others felt that visits to many high schools, exposing students to the options available to them, was preferable. Generally, facilitators felt that the linkage program should be flexible enough to meet different needs at different schools. Most facilitators also felt that the linkage component should begin early in the year before students have applied to high schools.

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